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Thesis

THE PURITAN ETHIC OF LABOR

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"Every toiler in the quarry,
Every builder on the shore,
Every chopper in the palm-grove,
Every raftsman at the oar,

Hewing wood and drawing water,
Splitting stones and cleaving sod,
All the dusty ranks of labor
In the regiment of God,

March together toward His triumph,
Do the task His hands prepare;
Honest toil is holy service;
Faithful work is praise and prayer."
-Selected.

"This is the gospel of labor,
Ring it, ye bells of the kirks.
The Lord of Love came down from above,
To live with the men who work.

This is the Rose that He planted,
Here in the thorn-crust soil:
Heaven is blest with perfect rest,
But the blessing of Earth is toil."
-Selected.

The Puritan Ethic of Labor

Outline

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The Puritan Ethic of Labor

Introduction

Macaulay speaks of the Puritans as the most remarkable body of men which the world has ever seen. It is to be our privilege, in the following pages of this paper, to dwell with this great group of people, that we might learn their ambitions, aspirations, and ideals, in their relation to the social and economic life which they produced.

We must withstand the temptation which comes to us of commenting upon their contribution to the home life, to the cause of liberty, and to the philosophy of individualism; all of which had a most valuable influence upon the social, political, and religious life of their time.

The Puritan doctrine of the rights and duties of property ownership doubtless registered a fundamental change in the social and economic life of the people. It would be of value to trace more clearly than we are permitted to in this paper, the combined influence of the Puritan ethic of property ownership and the Puritan ethic of labor.

However, our present concern is limited to the latter of these two. Our object is to determine what was the Puritan attitude toward labor. We desire, further,

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to ascertain how this compares with the views which have been held at other times, and in other places, by different social and religious groups of society. We wish to examine the industrial and economic life of the peoples touched by the influence of these differing views, with the purpose of determining whether or not there be a causal relationship between the two.

If evidence of this causal relationship can be found, we desire to discover what has been the contribution of the Puritan religio-ethical view of labor. We believe that this contribution has been great; much greater than economists have generally been willing to attribute to it. It is in the support of this thesis that the following pages are written. We believe that, for the prosperity enjoyed, especially in England and America, much is owed to the Puritan ethic of labor. In supporting this view, we do not mean to ignore, or to minimize, other contributing factors.

The religious interpretation of history is not new. We do not claim to be original in the view advanced here. We simply desire to join our support with that increasing number who are learning to recognize the religio-ethical influences upon the social economy.

In our treatment of the subject, we will first give the historical setting, in which we will observe a great change in the social economy in the years following the sixteenth century. Having observed some of the characteristics of this change, we will, in our second chapter, inquire what causes have contributed to this change. The third chapter will trace the changing religious attitudes toward labor. Following this, in the same chapter, we will trace the further effects of the Puritan urge to industry upon the social economy where its influence has been felt. It will be necessary to clearly distinguish between the capitalistic spirit and the capitalistic system. To this discussion, chapter four will be devoted. Our final inquiry will be with respect to the Puritan influence in the overthrow of slavery in the United States.

I. Historical Setting

1. Society Before the Sixteenth Century.

A study of the Greek and Roman view of society will reveal the general attitude in the world toward labor before the time of Christ. In Plato's Republic, slavery is considered almost as a necessity. Aristotle says, "The state exists in the order of thought before the individuals that compose it, just as the whole exists as such before it can be divided into its parts. It is by nature superior to its members which owe themselves to it. It is the condition of their existence, development, and prosperity."* Rights, then, belong to the state. Duties belong to man. Society was thought to be of two classes, those who work, and those who were not obliged to do so. "Citizenship," says Aristotle, "belongs only to those who are not obliged to work for a living."* Quoting him again, "There are some kinds of work to which a freeman must not debase himself; particularly manual labor. For these services, nature has

*Polit.B.1,cl. Quoted by Harris, New Englander,1865. p.249.
*Quoted by Harris, Ibid.p.251.

provided for us a class of men whom we subject to us, in order that they may work for us, either as slaves or as hired men. True, we cannot dispense with farmers and mechanics, but these have nothing to do with public affairs and are not worthy of the name of citizen. They are incapable of the greatness of soul and cannot have manliness because they work for wages, and, therefore must be of a mercenary spirit. The difference between them and the slaves is only an external difference. They ought to be slaves, and would be if the State were rich enough to buy them, or strong enough to enslave them."*

Three centuries later, Cicero sounded a similar note when he said, "What is more foolish than to respect the mass of the people as anything when you despise them individually as laborers and barbarians. The citizen ought to abandon the mercenary occupations of commerce and industry to the slaves and freedmen because no one can be free who is dependent upon a salary."*

These quotations are representative, and reveal a spirit which tended to retard industry and progress. In the life and teachings of Jesus we find implications which, when they became better understood, were destined to completely change this view. Nevertheless, the tradi-

* Quoted by Harris, New Englander, 1865- p. 262.

tional view was the dominating influence in society for several centuries. The attitude toward labor in the Oriental world today is not greatly removed from this view. It persisted in the Occident until the beginning of the sixteenth century, and following.

There were in Europe, at that time, two distinct classes of people, the nobility and the peasantry. The former class secured a living without work. Prior to that time, the nobility had been much engaged in petty fighting and feudal struggles, and offered protection to the peasant class upon whose labors they depended for a living. At this time nearly the entire population lived on farms, and it was the peasants who did the farm work. Their work was looked upon as servile labor. Indeed, it was not, in their minds, greatly removed from slavery.

2. Society Following the Sixteenth Century.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century there began to bud, in Europe and England, some new forces which were destined to change the whole religious, social, and political type of society wherever their influence reached. These new forces were to find expression in three great modern movements which, we believe, are not to be thought of as unrelated. These

movements were the rise of Protestantism, the rise of the Bourgeoisie, and the Industrial Revolution. We will now briefly observe these in the order in which they have been named.

(1) The Rise of Protestantism.

Protestantism is a movement; not simply an event. The year,1517, is the date generally given for the beginning of Protestantism; but this is a matter of convenience rather than of historical accuracy. For some time before that, the claims of needed reform were advocated, and efforts were put forth to accomplish it. Parallel with the religious unrest was social and political dissatisfaction. While the Reformation was primarily religious, it had within it those forces which were to have sociological influences of great significance.

Protestantism is of two types.* There is the more quietistic type as represented by the Lutherans in central Europe; and there is the more militant type as represented by those of Calvinistic influence in western Europe, Great Britain, and the United States. The Lutherans were not greatly interested in changing society about them. They retained much of the traditional attitude toward society. The Calvinistic peoples, however, set out to change the social life around them.

*See Troeltsch, Protestantism and Prosperity, Ch. III.

necessarily were the sides of orthodoxy, the ideas of the Enlightenment, but the Industrial Revolution. It will see strongly, perhaps there is the idea is what that were that.

(1) The Rise of Industrialism.

Industrialism is a movement that begins in Europe. The Enlightenment, in the sense quoted above, was a movement of philosophers, but this is a movement of industrial people, men of practical affairs. The leaders of the first Industrial Age, the founders of modern factory system, were not men of the Enlightenment. Their ideas were more practical, the thinking of men trying to solve problems. Most of them were, not students, but users of knowledge. Brought into contact with the philosophers of the Enlightenment, Marx and Engels, Bakunin, Lenin, Mao Tse-tung, Stalin, etc. the ideas of these thinkers were adapted to industrial relationships of these revolutionaries.

Industrialism has its own ideas." These is the same in the Enlightenment, they are interpreted by the philosophers of Industrial Society and those in the main political line of development in terms of industrial relationships in modern Europe, Asia and Africa, and the Indian Subcontinent. The Industrial man has created industrial relationships in modern society and. Long analysis that of the Industrial activities Tragic analysis. The Enlightenment, however, has not to change the social life of the Industrial Age.

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They were exceedingly active and militant. The kingdom of God, to the Calvinist, is not only within the individual believer, but it is to be brought about in a transformed society.

It is significant to note that, to a remarkable degree, the growth of industry and trade coincided with this latter type of Protestantism.* We will not concern ourselves here with the causes of this coincidence. That will be part of our problem as we study further the movements of the sixteenth century and following..

(2) The Rise of the Bourgeoisie

It was about the same time that there began to emerge, in the same part of Europe, what was destined to become a powerful middle class of people, the bourgeoisie. Hayes says of this class that,"It has done more than all other classes put together to condition the progress of the several countries of modern Europe, and to create the life and thought of the present generation throughout the world."* He adds, "The rise of the bourgeoisie is the great central theme of modern history."‡

*See Fullerton, Calvinism and Capitalism in the Harvard Theological Review, (Vol. XXI) p.164. (July,1928).
‡Hayes, Political and Social History of Modern Europe, Vol.I, Preface, p.VI.

The importance of this class of people is difficult to over-estimate. It was something new in the world. There was nothing just like it in the Orient. There had not been such, to any extent, in the Occident. It began in Western Europe and in England. It afforded a formally free labor society, a thing hitherto quite unknown. The nature of this free labor society was different. It seemed to be conscious of a contrast between its standards and those of the former laboring world. Upon the dependable soil of this class of society it became possible to develop an industrial system which has enormously changed society wherever its influence has reached. It is true that many of the elements of this new economy had existed before, but the application of these elements, since the rise of the bourgeoisie, the free laboring middle class, in our social economy is unique and epoch-making.

(3) The Industrial Revolution

Hayes says of the bourgeoisie, or townspeople, that they "were to grow in intelligence, in wealth, and in political influence; they were destined to precipitate revolutions in industry and politics, thereby establishing their individual rule over factories, and their collective rule over legislatures."*

* Hayes, Vol.I, p. 69.

Toward the close of the eighteenth century this class had become strongest in England. About this time there began in England, largely through their influence, such a change in the social, economic, and industrial life that the movement has been called an Industrial Revolution. The chief characteristics of this revolution were the many inventions of tools, engines, machines, etc., and the beginning of the factory system. It was the age of James Hargreaves, inventor of the "spinning jenny" (1770); of Richard Arkwright, "father of the factory system", who invented and applied the water frame, as a means of mechanical power; and of Edmund Cartwright, inventor of the power loom (1785). It was the age of Eli Whitney, American inventor of the cotton gin (1792); of James Watt, the Scotch inventor of the steam engine (1769); and of Robert Fulton, the American inventor of the steamboat in 1807.

So great were the results of these, and other inventions, that the whole structure of society was changed. It is to be observed that this revolution began in Great Britain and spread from there to western Europe and America.

II. Causes of the New Social and Industrial Movement.

Thus far, we have made four significant observations. First, the rise of the middle class, and the modern social economy, which has been so productive of wealth and prosperity, is primarily an Occidental phenomenon. Secondly, it did not come in the Occident, in any great measure until the sixteenth century and following. Thirdly, it is limited, then, in the Occident, primarily to Great Britain, Western Europe, and the United States. Finally, these are the portions of territory which have been dominated by the militant type of Protestantism, which has been influenced by the ethics of Calvinism.

It is reasonable for us to inquire why these things are true. Why Occidental? Why did it come following the sixteenth century? Why did it come in these particular portions of the Occident? What causes have contributed to bringing these results at that time and in these places? How does it happen that these social and industrial changes took place parallel, both in time and in territory, with the rise of Calvinistic Protestantism? What forces helped to produce this middle class and to give it its distinguishing characteristics? The answers to these questions will be the problem of our futher study.

1. Natural Causes

Some have believed that natural causes, such as climate, boundaries, rivers, etc., and natural resources, as iron, copper, gold, coal, etc. have made it possible for some countries to prosper: while others, not so well favored by nature, have been, as a result, slower in making progress. Hayes gives as one of the reasons why the Industrial Revolution might have begun in England that it had "a damp climate requisite to textile manufacturing."* Reinhold Niehbur observes that the United States has not been hampered by natural boundaries as has Europe, and credits the "uncommon opulance of nature" on our continent as one of the possible causes for the prosperity of the United States.

Natural resources, and other natural causes, have undoubtedly made their contribution, and are not to be overlooked; but they do not account for the changes which we have observed. Few would give this argument a very large place in the final answer as to the momentous changes in the social economy.

* Hayes, Vol.II, p. 67.

2. Social Causes

Greater emphasis has been given to social causes in the effort to account for the changed social economy. Social causes are many and varied. We shall attempt to group them under the acquisitive spirit, the advance of science, political, and economic influences. These are of sufficient importance that they cannot be ignored.

It is true that the "acquisitive society"is a modern phenomenon. But the acquisitive spirit is found in every age. It is not limited to the Occidental world or to modern times. It has existed through the ages. It has sent pirates out on the high seas. It has sent armies into fields of battle and conquest. It has lashed the backs of slaves to hasten their activity in the producing of wealth for their masters. It has led high church officials to make compromise with morals for material gain. It is universal. It was a necessary element, perhaps, in the rise of western capitalism and industry, but it cannot account for the fact that this rise came in the Occident in the sixteenth century and following, and in only certain sections of the Occident at that time.*

* See Ch. IV.

If the capitalistic interest alone were capable of producing what it needs to succeed, why did it not do so in China and India? Why did it wait so long to do so in Europe? The acquisitive spirit is sufficient neither to account for the modern social economy, nor to accurately describe the essence of modern capitalism.

The advance of science and scientific knowledge may be credited as a large contributing factor to the ends we have observed. This is a modern movement. The ancients never had a patent office. Inventions were few, and very crude, until about the time of the Industrial Revolution, and it is certain that these new inventions exerted a great influence upon the economic conditions of the people. The result has been that much of the present social order has been resolved into the work of specialists. Hayes observes that "the smiths, carpenters, and metal workers, more skilled than before, were able to construct the machines which the inventors desired."*

All this is doubtless true, and its benefits have been legion. But why were there few inventions before? How did they happen to begin in that particular portion of the world? Who made the inventions? Did the fighting nobility, who did no work, make them? No. Did

*Hayes, Vol. II, p.69.

the serving peasantry who looked upon their work as degrading? We believe not. These inventions were the product of the free laboring middle class. Before they were made, there must first have been a sufficient incentive for the task. The ancients believed that science was degraded as it was employed as an auxiliary to labor. We have to account for the new spirit or incentive for labor leading to scientific inventions. We must also look for those forces which gave to the middle class, its distinguishing characteristics. The middle class was not the product of the age of invention and discovery, for it preceded this age and was, to a great extent, responsible for its coming.

Political influences naturally affect the social and industrial life. So long as there is a marked instability of government, there cannot long continue to be thrift in industry. At the time of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in Germany, and for a long time after, there was no strong central government. On the other hand, in England, the government was much more stable and dependable. There can be no doubt but that these conditions affected the industrial life in each of the countries, and that much of the advance of prosperity and industry in England can be credited, in part, to good government; while its lack in Germany can be charged , to some extent, to unstable government.

However, strong central government is not sufficient to account for an industrial society. Rome had a strong central government, but she had no industrial people. She lacked the spirit of activity which is so necessary for a prosperous society. This element in her social life was lacking, and was quite impossible so long as the traditional attitude toward labor continued.

Marshall, the great economist, has said, "The two great forming agencies in the world's history are the religious and the economic."*n Society is largely determined by the altars at which we worship, and the tools with which we work. Through the years, greater emphasis has generally been given to the importance of the latter of these two agencies. Perhaps the economic interpretation of history is the most prevalent of all.

By this term we mean "that in any given epoch the economic relations of society, the means whereby men and women provide for their sustenance, produce and exchange and distribute things they regard as necessary for the satisfaction of their needs, exert a preponderating influence in shaping the progress of society, and in moulding the political, social, intellectual, and ethical relationships."*

* Quoted by Dr. Cell, Methodist Review, May-June,1924,p.380
* Laidler, History of Socialist Thought, p.199.

Perhaps the most extreme and influential advocate of this view was Carl Marx, the Socialist leader. His emphasis upon it was so great that his view has been called "economic determinism." Others have held the view with greater or less degree of emphasis. Professor E.E.R. Seligman has written a little book on the Economic Interpretation of History, in which he says, "We understand by the theory of economic interpretation of history, not that all history is to be explained in economic terms alone, but that the chief considerations in human progress are social considerations, and that the important factor in social change is the economic factor. Economic interpretation of history means, not that the economic relations exert an exclusive influence, but that they exert a preponderant influence in shaping the progress of society."* He acknowledges that the economic interpretation of history, in the reasonable and moderate sense of the term does not for a moment subordinate the ethical life to the economic life.

In his Evolutionary Socialism, Edward Bernstein has argued that, with the progress of society, non-economic factors tend to become increasingly important in determining

* Seligman, Economic Interpretation of History, (2nd.Ed.), p.67.

future changes. He asserts that"the point of economic development attained today leaves the idealogical, and especially the ethical, factors greater space for independent activity than was formerly the case. "*

Thus the emphasis upón the economic view varies with different people who hold the theory. Certainly there is an element of truth in the view. However, we believe that this theory is not enough to explain the results which we have observed. For an adequate explanation of the whole phenomenon of our prosperity, we must examine at least one other factor which has hitherto been hardly noted in the study of economic life- the factor of religion.* We will turn our attention to this factor, the other agent mentioned by Marshall (p.13), and the dynamic for the idealogical and ethical factors mentioned by Bernstein.

3. Religious Causes

In his Heroes and Hero Worship, Carlyle recognized that the most important fact about a man is his religion. Concerning the men who have influenced the ages he writes, "The thoughts they had were the parent to the actions they did; their feelings were the parents

*Bernstain, Evolutionary Socialism, pp.15-16. (Laidler, p.299).
* Niehbuhr, Puritanism and Prosperity in Atlantic Monthly, June, 1926.pp.721-725.

of their thoughts; it was the unseen and spiritual in them that determined the outward and actual; their religion...was the great fact about them."* This he believes to be true of men and nations.

Perhaps the first one to develop the dynamic relations of the religio-ethical factor to social productivity and power was Laveleye, a Belgian Sociologist. He found this dynamic in the new ethics of the Protestant religion. A more extensive and intensive study of this question from this point of view has been made by Max Weber, a German scholar, in his work Die protestantische und der geist des Kapitalismus.* Unfortunately this has not yet been translated into English. "His conclusion is that Protestantism is the main root of the modern capitalistic spirit, and that of all forms of Protestantism, Puritanism has been the most successful in encouraging business enterprize."* Troeltsch has followed Weber's views to a great extent as have also Cell, Niehbuhr, Fullerton, and others. Tawney has written on the subject though he does not follow Weber so closely.

We now recall having observed that the rise of the new capitalistic spirit and the industrial revolu-

*Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship, Every Man's Library #278, p.2
*Reprinted in Gesammelte Aufsatze zur Religionssoziologie, 1920. Vol.I., pp. 17-206.
*Niehbuhr, Puritanism and Prosperity, Atlantic Monthly. June, 1926., pp.721-725.

tion came in the portion of the Occident which was dominated by the militant type of Protestantism. (p.7). Again we raise the question, are these parallel movements historical accidents, or is there a causal relation between them? If there be a causal relation; if religion has furnished an influential dynamic, how may we account for it, and to what must it be traced? To these important questions we will devote a portion of the following chapter.

III. The Puritan Spirit of Industry

We believe that there is a definite and significant causal relationship between the Puritan spirit of activity, and industry, and the social and economic prosperity in the countries most touched by this spirit. We believe, further, that it is because of a different religious spirit and attitude toward labor that other countries have been retarded in their advancement. This can best be demonstrated by a brief review of the changing religious attitude toward labor through the centuries.

1. Oriental Passivity.

The religion of the Orient is of the mystical and contemplative type. The emphasis is not upon activity but rather is upon passivity. One is more religious, not by working in the world, but by withdrawing himself from the world. The effort is not so much to change the world as to be changed himself by becoming separated from it. It is a quietistic type of religious life. Furthermore, the view is quite prevalent that desire is necessarily objectionable. There should be no desire for an enlarged life, for social improvement. Indeed, the highest attainment is in reaching the condition where nothing is wanted.

A great economist came to the conclusion that "almost every economic evil in India is rooted in

religious and social custom."* When a Mohammedan is in difficulty, the tendency is to say, "What can I do? My Kismet is bad." Likewise the Hindu, under the same circumstances, will say, "What can I do? My Karma is bad." This is more or less fatalistic and paralyzing. Such a religious influence is a retarding factor in the social and industrial life. Rather than being an incentive to industry, it retards it and discourages it.

2. The Attitude of Jesus and the Early Church

In the life and teachings of Jesus we see revealed an attitude toward labor which is entirely contrary to the spirit of the time. Jesus was a laboring man, and was sympathetic toward labor. He placed high value upon service in the world, claiming to be among the people "as one that serveth."± He declared that he came, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."⁑ Jesus taught that "he that would be greatest must be the "doûlos" (slave) of all."** His testimony, "My Father worketh hitherto," (even unto the present time)"and I work,"±± would indicate an attitude toward labor widely different from that of current opinion. The heathen gods were not thought of as those who work.

* E. Stanley Jones, Christ of the Indian Road, pp. 38-39.
± Lu.22:27. ⁑ Matt.20:28. ** Matt.23:11. ±± John 5:17.

The Apostle, Paul, was likewise a worker. He made his living by making tents while he preached the Gospel without charge. When he saw some of his followers becoming idle, he wrote to the Church, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat."* To the same people he wrote, telling them to "work with their own hands."* If we take the teachings and example of the Founder of Christianity, and its most aggressive Apostolic advocate, we are obliged to conclude that here is a new spirit in the world. Work, with them, is looked upon as honorable, and necessary to the attainment of genuine greatness.

However, in spite of the teachings and examples of Jesus and Paul toward labor, the tendency of the early Church was to follow the Oriental, traditional practice of separating themselves from the world. Perhaps their hope for the return of Jesus being near at hand also contributed to their indifference toward secular activity. The monastic idea of separation from the world, as the shortest and surest way to reach Christian perfection, can be said to be the predominating characteristic of the early Church. It continued through the Middle ages in the monastic movement.

* II Thess. 3:10. * I Thess. 4:11.

However, though separated from the world, the monastic movement did have something in it which revealed a different attitude toward labor and industry. Their lives were sternly disciplined. They were urged to work part of each day with their own hands. The Cistercian Monastic Order, in England, for example; became noted for their prosperity in the growing of sheep and the production of raw wool. Compte speaks of "the fine spectacle of the holy hands of the monks extended to labors before regarded as degrading."* Outside the monastery, however, these obligations did not apply. The traditional view prevailed.

3. The Lutheran View of Labor

When we come to the Lutheran view, we find the beginnings of change. "Luther's utterances on social morality", says Tawney, "are the occasional explosions of a capricious volcano, with only a rare flash of light amid the torrent of smoke and flame, and it is idle to scan them for a coherent and consistent doctrine."± However, there have been some who have yielded to the "idle" passtime of searching Luther's writings, who have found their search very fruitful. Weber has pointed out the interesting, and significant fact, that, before the

* Compte, Positive Philosophy, Book Vl, Ch.XI.
± Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p.88.

time of Luther there was no word in any language which expressed the idea of a "calling" in secular activities. That word which, today, has become quite common in some languages, originated with Martin Luther. It occurs in his translation of Ecclesiasticus II:21. "Trust in the Lord and abide in thy BERUF."* This word, with Luther, seems to be more of an interpretation than a direct translation. The manner in which he used the term elsewhere indicates that he meant by "beruf" to live in the secular life religiously, and to serve God within one's calling.

In spite of his inclination to criticise Luther, Tawney acknowledges that Weber's discovery of this contribution of Luther has been of great value.‡

In Luther we find emphasis upon the universalized priestly function. In his mind, we are all kings and priests unto God. In his famous writing, e.g., Concerning Christian Liberty, Luther says, "It is true that we are all equally priests."⁑ In his Address to the Nobility, Luther writes, "The daily task is just as divine as the offices of the priest."

Thus we do see in Luther a transition from the monastic asceticism to a somewhat different view. He

* See Fullerton's Calvinism and Capitalism, Harvard Theological. July, 1928, pp.169-171.

‡ Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism. p.316.

⁑ Luther, Primary Works, Ed. W.&B. , p.270.

was greatly influenced by the traditional view, and did not entirely break from it. He did look with scorn upon the monastic idea which had proven to him a failure as a short and sure means of attaining Christian perfection. Rather than separate from the world, Luther believed that it was man's duty to serve God in his calling in the world. Man was to be in the world, but not of it. Luther did little to change the world from the social point of view.

Nevertheless, the view of secular duties having the value of a divine calling, and of life as a vocation, is a contribution too great to be overlooked. This "vocational idealism" which was born in the mind of Luther and spread to the other type of Protestantism has been defined by Professor Cell as "the unique religious evaluation, and ethical emphasis, put upon labor in pursuit of a vocation in the world by all branches of Protestant Christianity for the most part, in contrast to the Catholic, as well as to all other religious and social attitudes."*
He adds that "this pouring of the energies of religion into the ethical conduct of the secular life heralds the most significant events and movements of modern Christianity."*

* Dr. Cell, Methodist Review, March-April, 1924; p.213.

Luther had been somewhat anticipated by the German theologian, Tawler, who wrote, "One can spin, another make shoes, and all these are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I tell you, if I were not a priest, I should esteem it a great gift to mend shoes, and I would try to make them so well as to be a pattern to all."*

4. The Calvinistic and Puritan View Of Labor.

The thought of Luther took on increased intensity in Calvin's theocracy. When we speak of Calvinism, usually three systems are suggested to our minds. First, we think of the Calvinistic system of religious doctrine. Secondly, we think of the polity, or Presbyterian form of church government. Finally the social and ethical system of Calvinism comes to our minds. It is with the latter contribution of Calvinism that we are now chiefly concerned. The Genevan Reformer wrote, "The Lord commands every one of us, in all the actions of life, to regard his vocation ; for he knows with what great inquietude the human mind is inflamed, with what desultory levity it is hurried hither and thither, and how insatiable is its ambition to grasp different things at once. Therefore,to prevent universal confusion being produced by our folly and temerity, he has appointed to all their particular duties in different spheres of life. And that no

* Quoted by Dr. Cell in reviewing Weber's book. (pp.14-15).

one might rashly transgress the limits prescribed, he has styled such spheres of life vocations, or callings. Every individual's line of life, therefore, is as it were a post assigned to him by the Lord that he may not wander about in uncertainty all his days."* In Calvinism we have a high evaluation of religious activity in the world. It is one's duty to be active in the world for the glory of God. Calvinism is more distantly removed from the traditional view. It has a different kind of asceticism than the monastic view. "With all its repudiation of personal merit, Calvinism is intensely practical. Good works are not a way of attaining salvation but they are indispensable as proof that salvation has been attained."* Calvinism set out, not alone to change the individual, but to change society for the glory of God. It released a new dynamic that was destined to set in motion new forces which have been of transforming influence in the world.

The greatest representative we have of this dynamic Calvinistic ethics is Puritanism. The Puritan conception of calling is that "it is a life of strict discipline (an idea borrowed from Catholic monasticism) lived

* Calvin's Institutes, Book III, Ch. X., Par. VI.
* Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p.109.

in the secular sphere (an idea borrowed from Martin Luther) with the sole motive of glorifying God, and with the blessed sense of assurance of salvation as its reward (the special contribution of Calvinism)."* Lutheranism endured the world in suffering, pain, and martyrdom; Calvinism masters it for the honor of God by untiring work for the sake of self-discipline which work supplies, and the well-being of the Christian community which may be attained by means of it.

Work was considered by the Puritans as the best preventative against religious doubts or sexual temptations. Activity for the glory of God was the best means of reaching religious assurance. Hence, with Puritanism, labor was transformed from something degrading to a means of glorifying God, and of approaching religious certainty. It was a duty. Only those gainfully employed could hope to please God. "The Pastoral Office in Puritan communities hammered it into the minds of every seeker after assurance that ceaseless vocational activity, productive labor, was the only sure cure for doubt, the most efficacious means to attain the full and lasting assurance of being in a state of grace,"*

These ideas are reflected in many of the

* Fullerton, Harvard Theological Review, June,1928, p.181.
± Dr. Cell, Mimeographed review of Weber, p.19.

writings of the Puritans. John Bunyan makes Mr. Sagacity say, "It is the city of Destruction, a populous place, but possessed with a very ill-conditioned and idle sort of people."* How suggestive is the thought that the city of Destruction is populated with idle people.

John Milton, who has been characterized by Greene, the historian, as "not the highest, but the completest type of Puritanism",having suffered the loss of his sight, is still anxious "to serve his Maker lest He, returning,chide." He is disposed to ask, when his vision is gone, "Doth God exact day labor, light denied?"**

Weber has pointed out the interesting contrast between the closing scene in Dante's Divine Comedy, which closed with a contemplation of the vision of God: and Milton's Paradise Lost, at the end of which Adam and Eve go forth in a kind of triumphant resignation, to battle with the world. The Puritan poem, which has been called the "mysticism of action", has been substituted for the "mysticism of contemplation."***

Turning, now, from these interesting echoes, we may select the writings of two representative Puritans to determine definitely their attitude toward

* Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress, John Allen Edition. 1864.p.254.
**Milton, On His Blindness.
***See Fullerton, Theological Review. (Harvard) July, 1928. p.174.

labor. These representatives are Richard Baxter and Jeremy Taylor in whose writings are summed up the best ethical ideals of Puritanism. For our purpose here, Baxter's Christian Directory, and Taylor's Holy Living, offer us the best statement of the Puritan ethic of labor.

In his Christian Directory, Baxter writes, "Especially be sure that you live not out of a calling, that is, such a stated course of employment in which you may be best serviceable to God. Disability is, indeed, an irresistable impediment. Otherwise no man must either live idly or content himself with doing some little charres as a recreation or on the by; but every one that is able must be statedly and ordinarily employed in such work as is servicable to God, and the common good."* Again, "In the choice of work, it is no sin but a duty to labor, not only for labor's sake...but for that honest increase and provision which is the end of our labor; and therefore to choose a gainful calling, rather than another, that we may be able to do good and relieve the poor."* "Be wholly taken up in diligent business of your lawful callings when you are not exercised in the more immediate service of God. Labor hard in your calling... See that you have a calling that will find you employment for all

* Baxter, Christian Directory, Pt.I, Ch.3, Grand Direction X.
* Ibid, Pt.4, Ch.21.

the time which God's immediate service spareth."*
"Keep up a high esteem of time and be every day more careful that you loose none of your time than you are, that you loose none of your gold and silver. And if vain recreations, dressings, feastings, idle talk, unprofitable company or sleep be any of them temptations, to rob you of your time, accordingly heighten your watchfulness."*

Taylor begins his book ,Holy Living, with this striking statement: "It is necessary that every man should consider that, since God has given him an excellent nature, wisdom, and choice, an understanding soul, and an immortal spirit: having made him lord over beasts, and but little lower than the angels: he hath also appointed for him a work and a service great enough to employ those abilities, and hath also designed him to a state of life after this, to which he can only arrive by that service and obedience."*

Similar statements run through the entire chapter. "God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature by the labors of the ploughman, the skill and the pains of the artisan, and the dangers and traffic of the merchant: these men are, in their call-

* Quoted by Fullerton, Harvard Theological Review, June,1928, pp.184-185.

* Taylor, Holy Living, p.11.

ing, the ministers of the Divine Providence..." "No man can complain that his calling takes him off from religion; his calling itself, and his very worldly employment in honest trades and offices is serving God." "God hath given every man enough work to do, that there shall be no room for idleness." "...Ever remembering so to work in our calling, as not to neglect the work of our high calling."

"The resting days of Christians, and festivals of the Church must, in no sense, be days of idleness, for it is better to plough upon holy days than to do nothing or to do viciously." "Let your employment be such as may become a reasonable person; and not be a business fit for children or distracted people, but fit for your age and understanding." "As much as may be, cut off all impertinent and useless employments of your life.." "Every action of nature becomes religious, and every meal is an act of worship."*

What, in the light of these quotations, is the Puritan ethic of labor? It may be summarized, briefly, as follows: No man is to be idle, and to spend his time "in the glut and leisure of unemployment."* Every man is to be gainfully employed in such tasks as are worthy of

* Taylor, Holy Living, pp.11-30.
* Ibid, p.23.

one of his age and ability, and as will render best service to God and the common good. This employment is to be regular, and is to be done, not only for the sake of labor, but for the honest increase and provision which is the fruit of labor. Finally, according to God's purpose, only in the fulfillment of these obligations can one hope to arrive at the future state to which he has been designed.

Thus, we see in the Puritan ethic of labor a renewal of the spirit and practice of Jesus, with increased emphasis, and a complete rejection of the traditional view which looked upon labor as degrading, and a practice to be avoided by the better class of people. Labor, rather than being degrading, is a dignified practice. It is more, It is a religious duty from which no one is to be exempt who is physically and mentally able. This implies that one has the right to work at some useful and gainful occupation.

Just as the traditional view of labor acted as a retarding influence to gainful activity, so now the emphasis upon the duty and dignity of labor, as a spiritual offering for the glory of God, necessarily acted as a mighty impetus to industry. Under the divine urge to gainful activity there would naturally be increased income for those who worked for wages. Inventions would

likely result from this urge to activity. Increased industry would lead to increased productivity. Increased productivity would lead to increased wealth and prosperity. This is exactly what happened.

(I) Puritan Industry and the Middle Class

The Puritan ethic of labor cannot be said to be the cause of the rise of the Middle Class. It perhaps owes its origin to several contributing factors, not least among which was the Commercial Revolution.*

There had been a type of Middle class before Puritanism exerted a very great influence, but it is easily distinguished from the type about which we speak,- the bourgeoisie. If the seed of this new class is to be found in other causes, the new religious spirit of Puritanism furnished the warmth and nourishment which hastens its growth and determined, to a great extent, its distinguishing characteristics. Tawney has remarked that "such teaching, whatever its theological merits or defects, was admirably designed to liberate economic energies, and to weld into a disciplined social force the rising bourgeoisie, conscious of the contrast between its own standards and those of a laxer world."* He has also said that "the growth, triumph, and transformation of the Puritan spirit was the most

* Hayes, Political and Social History of Modern Europe, Vol.I, Preface, p.VI.

*Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p.111.

fundamental movement of the seventeenth century."*

Greene, the historian, has shown insight into this when he writes, "The meanest peasant, once called of God, felt within him a strength that was stronger than the might of nobles, and a wisdom that was wiser than the statecraft of kings. In that mighty elevation of the masses which was embodied in the Calvinistic doctrines of election and grace lay the germs of the modern principle of human equality."*

(2) Illustrations

One of the best illustrations of the effect of this Puritan spirit is found in the Wesleyan movement in the eighteenth century. That movement literally produced middle classes by lifting its followers from poverty and need to comfortable circumstances.

We must not overlook the fact that, in his ethical ideals, Wesley was a Puritan. Due to the theological controversy between Methodism and Calvinism, this fact has been overlooked. As a matter of fact, "Wesley combined Luther's epoch-making religious understanding of the gospel with Calvin's religious evaluation of activity in the world."* "The Puritan spirit of Wesley manifested

* Ibid, p.198.
* Greene, History of the English People, Vol.III, pp.44-45.
* Dr. Cell, Methodist Review, March-April,1924. pp.214-215.

itself in the way he made war on pleasure, in his diatribes against fashion in dress, in his praise of the Quaker austerity and simplicity, and in his fierce denunciations of luxury and waste, and in his stern moral censorship of any needless expenditure on the externals of life, even the expenditures for artistic, aesthetic, or culturistic purposes, and in his utilitarian attitude and his religious evaluation of industry and frugality."* We know that Wesley was a sympathetic student of Baxter and Taylor from whom we have already quoted; and that he urged his followers to read the works of these Puritan divines.

We are familiar with the fact that Wesley's work began among the poorer classes. When they first came into touch with the gospel, under Wesleyan influence, many of them were in deep poverty. Within a comparatively short time, Wesley observed that they were gaining in wealth. Indeed, so greatly did they increase in wealth that this very fact became a problem on his hands. As they increased in wealth, they were inclined to become indifferent toward religion, the very thing which had been a contributing factor in lifting them from poverty to comfortable circumstances. He feared the "decay of

* Dr. Cell, Methodist Review, March-April,1924. pp.214-215.

religion" due to the very fruits of prosperity which grew on the tree of religious industry. "Religion", he writes, "must of necessity produce industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches."*

Through the influence of their religious convictions the people were urged to labor, and at the same time to be temperate. He preached on self denial.* His ethical views are revealed in his sermon on The Use of Money.* He writes, "Gain all you can, by common sense, by using in your business all the understanding which God has given you.... You should continually be learning, from your own experience, reading, and reflection, to do every thing you have to do better today than you did yesterday. ....Having gained all you can, by honest wisdom, and unwearied diligence, the second rule of Christian prudence is, 'save all you can.'"

Following this is the urgent appeal to frugality which is characteristic of Puritanism. This industry and frugality were naturally productive of thrift. Prosperity followed the revival. Dr. Cell relates an interesting illustration of the prosperity due to this religious influence: "You seem to be a very temperate people here,

* Wesley, Works, Vol. III, p.317 ff.
* Wesley, Sermons, #48 on "Self Denial".
* Ibid, Sermon, #50.

and in comfortable circumstances", said Cardinal Newman on a walking tour in Cornwall, to a miner whom he met on the way. "How do you account for it?" The miner, slowly lifting his hat, made answer, "There came a man amongst us once. His name was John Wesley."*

This thrift, was notable among the Huguenots in France and in South Carolina, among the Quakers in Pennsylvania, and among the Dutch traders in Holland. All these drank from the same fountains of Calvinistic evatuation of gainful activity in the world.

Niebuhr has made the interesting comparison of European conditions today which, though it is not entirely Puritan, it does show Protestant influence, of which Puritanism is the most representative ethical type. He says, "Proof that the modern spirit of industry and commerce, with their unashamed secular ends, is closely related to religious ideas, may be easily found in the contemporary life of Europe. Protestant Prussia is industrial and Catholic Bavaria is largely agrarian, while Protestant Ulster is again significantly industrial. In England the commercial middle classes have been closely identified with the non-conformist, largely Puritan

* Related by Dr. Cell, Methodist Review, May-June, 1925.

sects, while the landed aristocracy is still the bulwark of the established church."*

The United States affords another interesting illustration of the same truth. Niebuhr also adds, "In all the nations of Europe, even in nominally Protestant countries, the medieval spirit is still powerful. The significance of America lies in the fact that our business life developed under sanctions wholly Puritan."*

This is true to a great extent, but overlooks one important fact. It fails to distinguish between the religious and social spirit of the New England settlement and that of Virginia. In these two settlements we have two different attitudes toward labor. The Virginia settlers were composed chiefly of that class of aristocracy which had continued, in England, to be large land holders. Necessarily there was with them the lowly working classes who still looked upon their labors as somewhat servile. In Silas Marner we have an interesting description of the early Virginia type of society. It was free from "the currents of industrial energy and Puritan earnestness; the rich ate and drank freely, and accepted the gout and apoplexy as things that ran mysteriously in respectable families, and

* Niebuhr, Puritanism and Prosperity, Atlantic Monthly, June, 1926, pp. 721-725.

* Ibid.

the poor thought that the rich were entirely in the right of it to lead a jolly life; besides, their feasting causes a multiplication of orts, which were the heirlooms of the poor."*

In New England we have a far different scene. Here we find the "industrial energy and Puritan earnestness." The people who settled in New England did not come from the land owning aristocracy, but from the industrial middle class which lived mostly in towns. Though they did not posses the wealth of the Virginia settlers, they were dominated by the Puritan urge gainful activity. Whereas, in Virginia, the "respectable families" were those who did not need to work; in New England only those who were actively engaged in a legitimate task could be looked upon as respectable. Virginia had the advantage of greater wealth; but New England had the advantage of the religio-ethical urge to gainful activity.

A comparison of the two colonies will reveal the fact that, though they had less wealth than the Virginia settlers, the New England colonists made much more rapid advance in prosperity. The great belt extending westward from New England across the United States has been greatly

* George Eliot, Silas Marner, Ch. III.

influenced by the New England Puritan ethics. Turner, in his Frontier in American History has said, "The New England preacher and school teacher left their mark on the West.... An intellectual stream from New England sources fertilized the West."* Harris, writing on the Christian Doctrine of Labor, said "This doctrine of the dignity, the rights, and the obligation of labor is well established in the thinking, customs, and laws of New England, and in that belt of land stretching westward which has fitly been called "the New England zone."‡

This zone is the most wealthy part of the United States. This portion of America has been the most free from the former traditionalism of any portion of the Western world. It is at once the most Puritan and the most wealthy and prosperous. On the other hand, the Virginian attitude toward labor offered a fertile soil in which slavery could more easily develop. It was not long before the state of Virginia was filled with slave laborers.

* Turner, The Frontier in American History, p.36.
‡ Harris, The New Englander, p. 248.

IV. The Capitalistic Spirit and the Capitalistic System.

1. Characteristics and Essentials of Capitalism

Capitalism is a term which, though frequently spoken, is often indistinctly defined by those who use it. It is well, first of all that we make some observations about it. We must distinguish between wealth and capital. The time was when much of the wealth possessed by kings, monarchs,etc., was in the form of jewels, herds, or flocks. These possessions were moved from place to place without specific interest in their productivity; but with concern only for their possession. It is easy to see that this does not correspond with our modern capitalism. The former was the accumulation of possessions; the latter is the thoughtful investment of possessions, for productive purposes. Possessions become capital only when returns can be received from their investment.

Secondly, the methods of the ancients in increasing their wealth was chiefly by conquest or some means of force. With kings,it was often by some means of tax. Clearly this is different from capitalism. The latter must be not by conquest, but by peaceful means carried on according to a carefully calculated policy. Both may have an acquisitive

spirit as an element urging increase of returns but the methods of accomplishing the desired results are widely different.

At least four things are essential to the modern western type of capitalism. First, it must be built upon the foundations of a dependable free labor society. Secondly, this free labor society must have an urge to work beyond the demand of earning one's daily bread. Then there must be the stern curbing of all unnecessary expenditures by careful calculation and frugality. Finally, it is dependent upon a society which recognizes the right of returns from financial investments. To each of these demands, Puritanism made a helpful contribution. The Puritan conception of stewardship and the Puritan condemnation of worldly living, together with the religio-ethical urge to industry, contributed more to the morale of capitalism than either the love of gain, or any conscious adaptation of a class to their place in the productive process.

It is a recognized fact that free labor is,on the average,much more dependable and efficient than servile labor. It has the encouragement of hope which is one of the most important factors in any useful life. The

bourgeoisie, which was a free laboring class, received much of its distinguishing characteristics from Puritan influence.* Urged on by the new religious spirit of industry, inspired by the new ideal that productive labor is honorable; conscious that their activities were in in fulfillment of a divine "calling" and thus bringing glory to God, these men furnished a type of labor far superior to that of the traditional type.

It is also to the credit of Puritanism that it urged the establishment of schools which would give opportunities of education to all. Here again a comparison of the New England and Virginia settlements is suggestive. By 1649 every community in New England, with the exception of those in the state of Rhode Island, had compulsory education "to defeat Satan who would deprive the people of knowledge of the Scriptures." Massachusetts had applied for a university six years after Boston was founded. This New England Puritan emphasis upon the importance of the school was, in a large measure, influenced by the English and Continental Puritanism. Virginia, on the other hand, was very slow in advancing education. Indeed, for a long time her policy was against it. One of her

* See page, 32.

governors "thanked God that there were no free schools in Virginia", and as late as 1681 the operation of a printing press was forbidden. The value of a more educated laboring class has no doubt contributed largely toward more efficient and dependable work. The Puritans are to be credited with much of this help even though their chief aim was to prepare people for the intelligent reading of the Scriptures.

Again, the Puritan urge to follow a definite stated calling had in it the seed which has reached fruition today in the work of specialists. To follow a regular calling is to increase efficiency,and thus dependability in that particular branch of labor. It tended toward specialization and efficiency. The importance of this can well be seen in the present capitalistic system. Much of our industrial work is done by specialists. There are trained workers for each special task. The weaver stays with the loom,and the spinner stays by his particular task.

Thus, if a dependable free labor society is necessary to the advancement of capitalism, we can see how great was the contribution of Puritanism to this end. The measure upon which capitalism is dependent upon the

efficiency and trustworthiness of the laborers it employs is indeed very great. Work done in the fulfillment of a divine calling, for the glory of God, will be done as nearly right as is possible. This sense of moral responsibility, supplemented by a better education and, in some measure, by specialization was necessarily productive of greater returns for capitalistic investments. Puritanism contributed this spirit, not so much in the interests of economic advancement, but as part of the disciplined life necessary for the glory of God. This idealistic motive, however, made the contribution none the less real.

The importance of an urge to work beyond the demand for one's daily bread is a necessary element in the capitalistic spirit. Experience has proven the fact that many will work only to the extent that they are obliged to in obtaining the physical necessities of life. There are many today who will do less with "piece-work" than they will when they are paid by the hour. The natural man is as lazy as circumstances permit him to be. Many who have sufficient means to meet their daily needs are willing to spend their lives in idleness. It is only when there is an additional urge to industry that people will work beyond the demands of their needs.

This additional urge was abundantly provided by the Puritan ethic of labor. Under no circumstances was a man justified in being idle so long as he was physically able to work. However much his wealth increased beyond his needs, the demand for continued productive labor continued in full force. The Puritan Baxter writes, "Wealth may excuse you from some sordid sort of work, by making you more serviceable to another, but you are no more excused from the service of work....than the poorest man.... Though they (the rich) have no outward want to urge them, they have the great necessity to obey God... God has strictly commanded it (work) to all."* Take from our present capitalistic system all those who are not obliged longer to work for their daily bread, and what will there be left? The entire structure would fall. Just so, it could not have arisen without this spirit of industry in gainful employment which we may call the capitalistic spirit. That is why the western capitalism is a comparatively recent phenomenon. It is because it was not until the beginning of Puritanism that this industrial urge received any great emphasis. The new capitalistic spirit preceeded the capitalistic system.

It is necessary that we keep this distinction in mind. Today we find so much evidence of activity and

* Quoted by Fullerton, Harvard Theological Review, July,'28,p.183.

industrial urge that it is difficult for us to believe that the middle class of people have not always possessed this spirit. Furthermore, we see nothing distinctly religious about it. Indeed, the tendency today is to be so employed even in useful and productive activity that little time is left for religion. The present day activity is not due to religious motivation, and is seldom thought of as a fulfillment of a divine calling. Later in this chapter we will have more to say about this. Just now we need to remember that, while religion is not now the motive power back of our industrial activity, such a dynamic was necessary at the beginning of our modern era. The activity today is, to a great extent, the fruit of the former religious urge, but the fruit has been plucked from the original plant and has now nearly forgotten where it received its nourishment and growth.

Any capitalistic enterprize is dependent for its sucess much upon its accomplishments in curbing all unnecessary and fruitless expenditures. Thrift is determined almost as much by what men save as by what they earn. A consecration of one's earnings to productive ends rather than for waste upon non-essentials is a fundamental element in capitalism.

I know of no class of people who were more

devoted to this policy than were the Puritans. They were most careful stewards of their possessions. The exhortation of Baxter was, "Every penny which is paid upon yourselves or your children or your friends must be done by God's own appointment, and to serve and please Him. Watch narrowly, or else that thievish carnal self will leave God nothing."* Wesley, whose ethics we have observed to be genuinely Puritan, was most emphatic in his exhortations to frugality. In his sermon on The Use of Money, his second point he writes, "Do not throw the precious talent (money) into the sea; leave that to the heathen philosophers. Do not throw it away in idle expenses, which is just the same as throwing it into the sea. Expend no part of it merely to gratify the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life."‡ The same frugality is urged with respect to the children. Nothing is to be needlessly expended.

This may truly be said to be the capitalistic spirit. It is the spirit of thrift. Dominated by a distinctly religious motive, it nevertheless has definite economic results. Industry and frugality produce increase. Though the increase of wealth was not the dominating

* Quoted by Fullerton, Havard Theological Review, July,'28,p.183.
‡ Wesley, Sermon 50.

motive of the Puritans, the spirit of productive activity and careful curbing of unnecessary expenditures, for the glory of God, brought this prosperity. This capitalistic spirit preceded, and to no small extent, contributed to the creation of the capitalistic system.

The fourth essential in capitalism which we have mentioned is that it is dependent, at least in its beginnings, upon a society which recognizes the right of returns from financial investments. The beginning of a capitalistic enterprize in a society which looks with disapproval upon the making of money,or the receiving of interest or dividends,is exceedingly difficult. Through the centuries,since the time of Jesus, the church has recognized the exceeding danger of riches to the spiritual life. Even through the Middle Ages the church, though greatly increased in wealth, felt condemned for being so. It was this feeling of condemnation which prompted Francis of Assisi to seek "Lady Poverty" with his whole heart. The Puritans,also, regarded the pursuit and possession of riches as dangerous because of the temptation to confidence and contentment therein, and to laziness and sensuality. Nevertheless, though somewhat fearful of the results of riches, they continued to urge industry of life which was productive of wealth.

Necessarily the Puritans could not long continue to oppose the gaining of wealth as such. There came a slightly,yet significant, changed attitude toward riches. Only as the increase of wealth became hurtful to the soul did it receive opposition from the Puritan. Indeed, Baxter justifies a person for accepting an opportunity to increase his profit,saying, "When God shows you a way in which you can lawfully make more without danger to your soul or to others than you can in some other way, and when you reject this way and follow the way that brings in less, then you cross one of the purposes of your calling. You refuse to be God's steward and to accept His gifts in order to use them for others when He so demands. Of course (Baxter continues, as aware of the danger of this advice) you are not to labor to be rich for the purpose of fleshly indulgence, but for God's sake."*

Being rich for God's sake was something new under the sun. To look upon the increase of wealth as a mark of God's favor was comparatively a new idea, so far as the Christian church was concerned. This view was quite characteristic of Judaism,however. The Puritans did not

* Quoted by Fullerton, Harvard Theological Review, July, 1928, p. 186

look with approval upon the "begging friars" as the great examples of holiness as had been true in the earlier period. Begging was thought, rather, to be dishonorable, and the desire to be poor was thought by them to be absurd. Calvin found no objections to increased wealth. He did insist that all cause of desirable prosperity consists in the divine benediction alone.* The increase of wealth was not thought by him to be an enemy. The enemy of Calvinism "is not the accumulation of riches, but their misuse for purposes of self-indulgence and ostentation. Its ideal is a society which seeks wealth with sober gravity of men who are conscious at once of disciplining their own characters by patient labor, and of devoting themselves to a service acceptable to God.‡ Calvin writes, "We shall not rush forward to seize on wealth or honors by unlawful actions, by deceitful and criminal arts, by rapacity and injury of our neighbors; but shall confine ourselves to the pursuits of those interests which will not seduce us from the paths of innocence."⁑ Riches are acceptable, but they are to be gained for the glory of God, and not by means contrary to His spirit.

* Institutes, Vol.I, Book III, Ch. 7
‡ Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p. 105
⁑ Calvin, Institutes, Vol.I, Book III, Ch. VII, Par.IX.

The same idea was advanced by the Puritan Franklin in his "Hints for Those that would be Rich and Advice to a Young Tradesman. (1748) These writings contain such maxims as "Remember that time is money, credit is money, its offspring more, and so on; he that murders (!) a crown destroys its progeny, even scores of pounds." "The most trifling actions affecting a man's credit are to be regarded." "The good paymaster is lord of another man's purse."* Franklin looked upon the making of money as a duty. No one had a right to be indifferent either toward the earning or investing of money. Both of these were matters of religious duty to the developed Puritan ethical ideals. This, too, made its valuable contribution to the capitalistic spirit.

2. The Capitalistic Spirit and System Distinguished.

What we have said thus far in this chapter has been chiefly with respect to the contribution of Puritanism to the capitalistic spirit. We have expressed the belief that,without this spirit, modern capitalism could not, without difficulty, have arisen. This Puritan spirit may be thought of as the nursing father of the civic industrial capitalism of the middle class. It is of interest to note that modern capitalism did not rise first among the landed aristocracy, which was not so greatly influenced by the

Puritan ethics, but rather among the bourgeoisie members where this influence was the greatest. The contribution of this religious influence was early noted by others. "The Spaniards noted that Calvinism fostered business spirit; Petty in his Political Arithmetic, written before 1688, published 1691, pointed out the relation of Calvinism to the energetic capitalistic development of Low Countries. Gothein calls the Calvinistic Diaspora "the nursery of the capitalistic economy".* Thus the debt of modern capitalism to the Puritan spirit is indeed very great.

But alas! How far much of it has strayed from its original moorings. Though it is the child of the Puritan capitalistic spirit, "there is danger lest this overgrown child of Christianity turn Christianity itself out of doors."* Capitalism has now become a great system. Built upon the contribution of the past, it has become so firmly established that it is now able to stand alone. More than that, it is able to assert itself. With the higher standards of living, the "high pressure" advertising, and the "high pressure" salesmanship, there is a compulsion

* Dr. Cell's mimeographed sheets, p.7.
* Harris, in the New Englander, 1865, p. 275

to labor now which was quite unknown in the days of militant Puritanism. The making of money is now no longer thought of to be for the purpose of glorifying God. Indeed, it has almost become a god itself to be worshiped. The thought of a divine calling to secular activity has been transformed into merely the thought of a job. Owners of big industries often own and control the tenement houses in which their employees dwell. Often they own the stores from which their laborers purchase their food supplies. To a great extent the owners of "big business" have a strangle hold upon the lives of those in their employment and upon their families. However much modern capitalism owes to Christianity, there is much in it today which is lacking the Christian spirit.

The capitalistic spirit is the product,chiefly, of Puritanism. The present capitalistic system has little to do with Puritanism. "The imposing,but also terrible expansion of modern capitalism", writes Troeltsch, "with all its calculating coldness,and soullessness; its unscrupulous greed and pitilessness, its turning to gain for gain's sake, to fierce and ruthless competition, its agonizing lust of victory, its blatant satisfaction in the tyrranical power of the merchant class has entirely loosed it from its original ethical foundation, and it has beeome a power directly opposed to Calvinism and Protestantism."*

* Troeltsch, Protestantism and Progress, p. 139

V. The Puritan Influence upon the Abolition of American Slavery.

1. The Influence on the Ordinance of 1787.

We have repeatedly indicated that the Puritan emphasis upon the duty, dignity, and rights of labor contributed greatly to the rise of the free laboring middle class. The logical tendency of such emphasis would be to increase this type of laborer and to decrease the servile laboring class. We find the most significant example of the results of this influence in the study of the abolition of the slaves in America. In this great victory, Puritan influence can be clearly traced.

In the first place, the type of society in New England, with its urge upon all people to gainful activity, offered a far less fertile soil for the growth of slavery than did the Virginia type. Though slavery existed in all of the states in 1776, its overthrow soon began in New England, beginning with Vermont in 1777, and spreading to Massachusetts in 1783, to New Hampshire in 1784, and then on across the North until every northern state but Deleware had given it up. The first victory outside of New England was in Pennsylvania in 1780, chiefly through the efforts of the Quakers there. On the other hand, there was some movement for freedom in the southern

states, chiefly in Virginia, under the influence of thoughtful men like Washington, Jefferson, and Grayson. However, even the influence of these men was not great enough to bring its overthrow there, so fixed was it in the spirit of society.

The institution of slavery was a constant problem on the hands of the federal government so long as slavery existed. To follow a definite policy with regard to it seemed utterly impossible. Was a slave a person, or was he a piece of property? Should his owner be taxed according to the price value of his slaves? If the slave was a person, was he a whole person? In determining the state population for sufferage representation, should a negro be counted as a white man? When a compromise was offered on this question by Madison, in 1783, in which it was recommended that three slaves should be considered the equivalent of two whites, Massachusetts voted against the compromise on the ground that slaves were to be considered entirely as persons, while southern states voted against it on the ground that slaves were only property. This is just an illustration of the difficulty with which the Federal government was confronted when it attempted to reach a settled policy.

Abraham Lincoln, however, believed that the government did early have a policy with respect to slavery. He believed that this policy was established in the Ordinance of 1787, sometimes known as the Northwest Ordinance. In this ordinance there was a clause which forbade the right of slavery in that territory northwest of the Ohio river which had been ceded to the federal government by Virginia on March 1,1781. This prohibition of slavery in the Northwest Territory, Lincoln believed, had placed the institution of slavery "in the course of ultimate extinction."

To Thomas Jefferson he gave the credit for this great step. There can be no doubt but that he earnestly desired this and labored for its accomplishment. His sense of moral and social justice made him very urgent in his anti-slavery efforts. We do not wish to deprive the noble Jefferson of any glory due his name, but the facts show that credit is due elsewhere. In the first place, Jefferson had tried this very thing before and had failed. In the second place, Jefferson was not even present when the Ordinance of 1787 was passed. In the scheme presented in 1784 by the committee of which Jefferson was chairman, a clause was included which prohibited slavery in the Northwest territory after 1800. In spite of the efforts of Jefferson,this clause was stricken from the

report before it was finally passed. Jefferson was defeated by the people of his own state. A similar thing happened during the following March. Rufus King of New England re-introduced the slave question with a similar proposition. This attempt was also defeated by a vote of eight states to four, Virginia being among the states which were against the prohibition measure.

How can we account for the fact that, after these defeats in 1784 and again in 1787, in which the clause was included, in only a very few days, with but one dissenting vote, when it had five southern states present to one from New England? This is a most interesting Congressional experience. For our solution of this enigma, it will be necessary to follow some steps which had taken place in Puritan New England. Through the influence of B. Tupper and Rufus Putnam, a new Ohio Company was organized in Boston, composed of Massachusetts men, on March 3, 1786. Plans were made to purchase one thousand shares, of one thousand dollars each, to buy land in the Northwest from the federal government. Within a year these shares had been bought and, on March 8, 1787, Rufus Putnam, Samuel Parsons, and Menasseh Cutler were made directors of the Ohio Company. Samuel Parsons hastened at once with a memorial telling Congress of the offer of the Ohio Company. Cutler, a preacher with shrewd political inclina-

ations, was chosen to represent the Ohio Company before Congress to buy the land. To a government whose treasury was desperately short of funds, Cutler's offer must have looked most inviting. He was received kindly, and made friends with several of the most influential members of Congress whose support he considered of greatest importance.

We must keep in mind the fact that Cutler could not himself present the matter before Congress. He could only present it to the selected committee who would be privileged to bring it before Congress with such provisions and recommendations as suited themselves. For some time a committee had been at work making plans for the disposition of these lands, but had accomplished little. On May 10th, a new committee had been appointed composed of Edward Carrington, Dane of Massachusetts, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, Kean of South Carolina, and Smith of New York. This committee brought in their report of an ordinance for the government of this new territory, and read it for the first time in Congress on July 11, 1787. In the committee, the South held the balance of power. There was nothing in their first report on the question of slavery. The anti-slavery clause was not included until the second reading.

Cutler had been there less than six days, having come on the evening of July 5th. He lost no time getting his wishes before those in the place of power. He represented a group of people who were concerned about the slave question. The home builders of the Ohio Company did not wish to be confronted with the problem of slavery in the new land. They held the views which had earlier been expressed by Timothy Pickering in a letter to King of Massachusetts, in which he said,"To suffer the continuance of slaves till they gradually be emancipated in the states already overrun with them may be pardonable because unavoidable without hazarding greater evils; but to introduce them into countries where none now exist....can never be forgiven."* This letter from Pickering to King,both of whom were Massachusetts men, prompted the latter to bring the matter before Congress again in 1785. Every man in Congress knew the anti-slave views of Puritan New England.

What happened between the time of the first reading of the proposed ordinance on the eleventh day of July,without the slavery prohibition clause, and the passing of the prohibition measure three days later with only one dissenting vote,is a question of great

* Pickering, Pickering, V.I, p. 510
Quoted in The American Nation,a History, Vol.X,p.117.

interest. Unfortunately there is no complete historical evidence for an answer. The passing of this measure can be accounted for only by the influence of a powerful lobby, backed up by some strong means of leverage which could bring results. Certainly Cutler was capable of influencing this lobby. He knew both how to win friends and how to use them. Futhermore he had the million or more dollars of New England money which was so greatly needed by the Federal treasury. It is quite probable that this had much to do with the changed attitude such men as Lee who,having previously voted against Jefferson and King now speaks for an hour in behalf of the proposed Ordinance which prohibits slavery.

We are told that Grayson, a Virginian, is to be given the credit for introducing the clause after the first reading.* This does not discount, for a moment, what we have said. Grayson, like Jefferson, was opposed to slavery but, like Jefferson in 1784 and King in 1785, he would have been helpless were it not for the leverage of the New England dollars. If Cutler could encourage a Virginian to introduce this prohibition clause before the second reading, that would be a most reasonable thing to do. Not being a member of Congress himself, Cutler was dependent upon some member to introduce it. Some historians are strongly of the opinion that Dane of Massachusetts

who was a member of the committee, was the one who introduced the anti-slavery measure, instead of Grayson. There is no certainty in this matter. However, this is not the most important fact. The really significant thing about the whole matter is that the New England members of the Ohio Company who were buying the land were unwilling for slavery to be allowed in the new territory. Knowing that these men were dominated by the Puritan ideas of the dignity, and duty, and right of free labor, and an intense opposition to slavery, Congress was obliged to come to their terms or loose this great opportunity to strengthen the federal treasury. The entire ordinance finally passed on July 27, 1787. It included the provision, "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted."*

Thus we see the strong New England (Puritan) influence in placing the institution of slavery in the "course of ultimate extinction" through the Ordinance of 1787. Two motives prompted this opposition. There can be no doubt but that their sense of social justice and of the rights of the negro went far in this action.

* Quoted in The American Nation, a History, Vol.X, p.122

Their belief was that every man had a right to labor "for that honest increase and provision which is the end of our labor,"* and thus they could not but be opposed to slavery. Then there was an interest in the free laboring white man as well. The presence of the servile worker is always a menace to the rights of the free laboring man. His presence has a tendency to lower the dignity of labor. Likewise it tends to deprive him of his rights as a laborer. The slave is robbed of the just fruits of his toil. As a result his standards of living are lowered. The same is true of the standard of the work which he does. Thus the slave is detrimental to industrial enterprize. All this was hurtful to the Puritan society, and thus received its opposition.

2. Lincoln Supports the New England Views

We will now turn our attention to the arguments of Abraham Lincoln on the slavery question to see how fully he accepted and advocated this New England doctrine. He was opposed to the extension of slavery. In a speech given at New Haven, Connecticut, on March 6, 1860, he declared this opposition, saying, "One of the reasons why I am opposed to slavery is just here..... I want every man to have a chance—

* Baxter, Christian Directory, Part 4, ch.21.

and I believe the black man is entitled to it- in which he can better his condition... Up here in New England you have a soil that scarcely sprouts black eyed beans, and yet where will you find wealthy men so wealthy and poverty so rarely in extremity? There is not another such place on earth. I desire if you get too thick here and find it hard to better your condition on this soil, you may have a chance to strike and go somewhere else where you may not be degraded, nor have your family corrupted by forced rivalry with negro slaves. "*

Others observed that Lincoln was concerned for the free laboring white man as well as the negro. "He spoke, not for the black man", said Senator Hale of New Hampshire, in a speech at Galesburg, Illinois, "but for the fair haired, ruddy cheeked Saxon - to plead the cause of the laboring class which was endangered by slavery."* "So too spoke the Republican orators - free labor must be saved from the slave power."*

In his speech at New Haven, to which we have referred, Lincoln said, "Speaking of slavery, "We think that species of labor an injury to free white men."*

* Lincoln, Works, Nicolay and Hay ed. Vol.I, p.625.
* Quoted by Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II, p.438.
* Lincoln, Works, Vol.I, p. 619.

Six years before that he wrote, "Equality in society alike beats inequality, whether the latter be of the British aristocratic sort or of the domestic slavery sort.... As labor is the common burden of our race, so the effort of some to shift their share of the burden to the shoulders of others is the great durable curse of the race.... Free labor has the inspiration of hope; pure slavery has no hope."*

How much this sounds like the Puritan ethic of labor. Certainly Baxter and Taylor would be pleased to endorse Lincoln's words which he used in a tariff discussion: "Inasmuch as most good things are the product of labor, it follows that all such things of right belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has so happened, in all the ages of the world, that some have labored, and others have, without labor, enjoyed a large portion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue. To secure for each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government."*

This might sound like Marxian influence, and as a repudiation of capital, but such is not Lincoln's view, as it was not the Puritan view. He frequently

* Lincoln, Works, Vol.I, p.179.
* Ibid., p.92.

stated his views on the relation of labor to capital. In his first speech to Congress, December,1861, he said, "Labor is prior to, and independent of capital. Capital is the fruit of labor, and never would have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is superior to capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights which are worthy of protection as are any other rights..." This he repeated in a letter to the Workingmen's Association of New York, in March,1864. * In his Boston letter he said, "Republicans are for both the man and the dollar, but in case of conflict, the man before the dollar."* While his labor theory of values is quite like the Marxian view in many respects, we find that he departs from Marx in his view of property rights. In both of these views Lincoln follows essentially the Puritan position.

A comparison of Lincoln's views with those of the slave holding peoples of the South will reveal a vast difference. He carried in his campaign scrap book a clipping from the Muscogee (Alabama) Herald,* which read, "Free society! We sicken of the name! What is it but a

*Lincoln, Works, Vol.II, p.502.
* Ibid., Vol.I, pp. 532-533.
* Dated October 15,1856.

conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small fisted farmers, and moon struck theorists? All the Northern, and especially the New England States, are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel, and small farmers who do their drudgery; and yet who are hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body-servant. This is your free society which the Northern hordes are endeavoring to spread into Kansas."* The Richmond Inquirer even endorsed the theory that enslavement of either whites or blacks was justifiable and right."*

How different are these expressions from either those of Lincoln or of the Puritan leaders! They are a reversion to the ethic of labor from which the Puritans had revolted. Such views found no place in New England, and were not supported in that "New England zone" extending to the west which was dominated by the Puritan ethic of labor. It was this "New England zone" from which the major amount of anti-slavery agitation came. The motives back of this agitation were the same as those we have mentioned in our study of early Puritan opposition to servile labor. A good example of this is the article

*Quoted by Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln, V.II, p.439.
* Ibid., p.440.

written by the Reverend Samuel Harris of Bangor,Maine, on The Christian Doctrine of Labor.* This was written in 1865 during the stormy period before the passing of the anti-slavery amendment to the Constitution. It expressed claarly the Puritan view of labor.

This New England zone agitation,combined with Lincoln's emphasis of the Puritan ideal of free labor, contributed most to the complete overthrow of slavery. Thus we have seen how great was the Puritan influence in placing the institution of slavery "in the course of ultimate extinction" in the Ordinance of 1787, and again in accomplishing its final overthrow in 1865. Our debt to the advocates of the duty,dignity,and right of free labor, together with the right of the fruits of that labor, is deserving of a more universal acknowledgement.

* See the New Englander, 1865.

Vl. Summary and Conclusion.

The stream of life in any given society has many tributaries. It is quite difficult, if not impossible, to determine the proportion each of them has contributed to the final stream. So it is with the social and economic changes that come with the passing of the years. Several causes contribute to the change, and in a complex society, it is difficult to determine the relative value of each.

In the preceding pages, we have observed a most significant change in the social economy of the peoples of western Europe, England, and America following the sixteenth century. A new class of society arose - the bourgeoisie- which was quite different from anything that had been known before. In the same portion of the world there began the great Industrial Revolution which has spread into other lands to a great extent.

Parallel with these movements there came a striking change in the religio-ethical view of labor in the world. The traditional view, which looked upon labor as a disgrace, and something to be shunned by gentlemen, was, in these countries, largely overthrown by the spreading of a different view by representatives of the new, militant type of Protestantism. This new view, which was

advocated, chiefly, by the Puritans, looked upon labor as the fulfilling of a duty to God and a means of glorifying Him. Rather than work being a disgrace, it was, by the Puritan people, a divine calling, a spiritual duty, a dignified means of rendering acceptable service to God, an obligation upon all men whether of wealth or of poverty.

The measure in which this new spiritual urge to gainful activity affected the social economy is difficult to estimate. We believe that political and economic causes, together with the natural resources of these named countries, combined with this capitalistic and industrial spirit of Puritanism to bring about the change. However, the examples of the Wesleyan movement in England, of the Huguenots in France and South Carolina, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, the "New England zone" in the United States, all support the thesis that the measure of Puritan influence upon these places, in their social economy, was indeed very great. This, we believe, we have conclusively shown in the preceding pages.

The four essential elements in capitalism: dependable free labor, an urge to industry beyond the demands of immediate needs, frugality, and the social approval of the gaining financial returns, have all been shown to have received great help from Puritanism. We

have carefully distinguished between the capitalistic spirit, which we credit, largely, to Puritanism, and the modern capitalistic system which was made possible by this spirit, yet is divorced from it. While modern capitalism owes a great debt to Puritan influence, the latter cannot be held responsible for the unchristian practices found in the present capitalistic system.

This same Puritan doctrine of the dignity, duty, and right of labor also necessarily exerted a very great influence upon the overthrow of servile labor. It gave free labor high recognition, and tended toward the defeat of slave labor. We have shown that opposition to American slavery came first, and most effectively, from that portion of the United States which was dominated by Puritan influence. We have also shown that the New England Puritan influence was the effective means by which the clause prohibiting slavery was made a part of the Northwest Ordinance in 1787, which placed slavery in the course of ultimate extinction. Also it was the agitation against slavery, in the interests of the free laboring white man, that brought its final overthrow. Abraham Lincoln is found to have accepted the Puritan view of labor, and shared with them in their interest in the rights of the free laboring

white man. These interests were the largest contributing factors in the overthrow of slavery.

It is well that New England is renewing her interest in the Puritans during the tercentenary anniversary of the founding of the Puritan settlement in America. A genuine appreciation of these people will look beyond their severities with witches and Quakers, to note the vast contribution they made to the welfare of the new country in their urge to industrial and disciplined life. We owe to them our debt of appreciation.

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